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FREE and CANDID
CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
General Points of Difference
BETWEEN
The CHURCH of ENGLAND
AND THOSE OF
OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

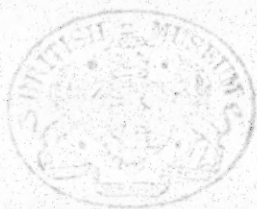
Wherein the Conduct of the *English* Dissenters is examined,
and shewn to be consistent with the genuine Principles
of civil Liberty, Reason, and Christianity.

In a LETTER to
Mr. *PETER WHITFIELD*,
Touching his Preface to a Book intituled,
The **Christianity** of the **New Testament**.

By ABRAHAM BOURN.

L O N D O N :

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FREE and CANDID
CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

SIR,



Received your Preface to a Book intituled, *The Christianity of the New Testament*, by the Hands of Mr. ANSDALL. I thank you for the Present, which I perused at my Leisure: And in examining the Contents, have, pursuant to your Desire of my writing an Answer to it, made some Remarks and Observations, which you may, if you please, call by that Title. The Work, indeed, required an Answer, as it advances many Things, and those of a momentous Nature, contrary to the Sentiments that I, and many others, have adopted; and which I am not yet convinced to be erroneous. I did not imagine, when I took it in Hand, that I should have been under the disagreeable Necessity of dis-

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fering from you so much as you will find I have. Disagreeable I call it ; for it is a Pleasure, I believe, to most People, excepting those who are extravagantly fond of disputing, to find the Opinions of others agree with those of their own. Be this as it will, Truth and Sincerity should ever be preferred to Complaisance and Adulation : And where there lies a Necessity of declaring one's Opinion, it should be done with the strictest Regard to this Rule. On this Principle, Sir, I hope you will excuse any Freedoms I may have taken with your Preface ; more especially when I profess the Regard I have for your Person and Character, and the Care I have taken to preserve the Rules of Decorum, and to avoid every thing that has the Appearance of personal Reflection, Satyr, or Invective : Artillery improper to be used in Arguments of a religious Nature. In dependence then, of your Favour in this Respect, I begin the Undertaking without farther Preamble.

You open with a Complaint of the Prevalence of *Socinianism* in this Age and Nation, to the Prejudice of the great Doctrines of *Redemption, Propitiation, Satisfaction and Salvation* by JESUS CHRIST. Many and loud have been the Complaints against *Socinianism, Arianism, Lutherism, Calvinism, &c.* by one Party or other. But as I never read the Works of SOCINUS, ARIUS, LUTHER or CALVIN, nor any Part of them, I will not pretend to judge
of

of the Justness of the Complaint. If SocINUS is the Author of any Thing bad, 'tis well I am ignorant of it : If he is not, the Observation is but ill grounded. As to the Doctrines of Redemption, Propitiation, &c. I suppose you have handled them fully in the Book to which you refer, as no more is said here than serves for an Introduction to what follows ; and what you say gave Occasion to your Work. A Work that may be of service, as you say, particularly to the Jews ; for whom it might have been more peculiarly adapted ; as the Number of Christians, “ *who endeavour to expunge those Doctrines out of the Christian Scheme,*” are much fewer I apprehend, than you seem to imagine. The Gentleman you bring your Charge against, does not appear to be one of that Number.

“ SUPPOSING,” you say, “ the Doctrine here
 “ asserted, in the Sense it hath generally been re-
 “ ceived in the Christian Church for more than
 “ Seventeen Hundred Years, prove, upon impar-
 “ tial Examination, as I trust it will, to be of the
 “ Essence of the Christian Faith and Religion, it
 “ will, I think, be undeniable that if any one, of
 “ the Character of a Christian Minister, in explain-
 “ ing publicly the Gospel of CHRIST, and shewing
 “ the Benefits thence accruing to Mankind, shall
 “ omit to mention this great Benefit of *Propitiation*
 “ and *Redemption*, he may be said in the Perfor-
 “ mance, not to have acted as becomes a Minister
 “ of CHRIST, or not to be a true Christian.” p. 5.

NOTHING is more plain, than if a Minister professes to shew *all* the Benefits accruing to Mankind by the Coming of CHRIST, and omits *one* of them, he has not acted as becomes a Minister. But what follows is something surprizing; That such a Declaration (Omission I suppose you mean, for it is that you complain of,) in a Neighbouring Minister should give *immediate Occasion* to your vast and laborious Work! That Minister must be a Man of great Consequence, or you pay him a very high Compliment, whose Opinion uttered in private Conversation, (which you say, *discovered a Dislike to the Doctrine of Redemption, and a Persuasion of the Sufficiency of Natural Religion to recommend Mankind to the divine Favour,*) or whose Sermon, delivered to a public Audience, (wherein you say this Doctrine was omitted,) should deserve to have so large and learned a Volume in Quarto, with a Preface of forty Pages, printed and published expressly on the Occasion! It appears almost as extraordinary that a Gentleman should depend intirely on his Memory, be it ever so good, in his Account of a Prayer and Sermon, which he criticizes upon, and writes against. You say you will keep strictly to Truth, and at the same Time own your Account to be imperfect. How is it possible to keep strictly to Truth in the Repetition of a Thing, unless that Account or Repetition be perfect, or agree with the Original? Most People, I judge, would have thought it necessary to have had the

Sermon

Sermon before them, e'er they attempted to write, much more publish, any thing against it. No doubt the Minister, whoever he be, would have granted the Use of his Sermon on such an Occasion, rather than run the Risk of having *it* misconstrued, and *himself* falsely accused.

You begin with the Prayer, which, by the Character you yourself give of it, was undoubtedly a good one. "A Prayer so truly elegant, proper, and regular, with Respect to Sense, Expression and Connection, as I apprehend very few (if any one Man alive) capable of composing and uttering *extempore*." *p. 6.* What then was the Fault of this excellent Prayer, which you say might have been composed and uttered by DAVID or SOLOMON, SOCRATES or PLATO? Why, that grand one of omitting your favourite Doctrine.—In short, *the Name of CHRIST was not mentioned in it—till the Close.* And must a Minister be condemned in the Gross, for omitting in a Prayer or Sermon the Name of CHRIST, or a single Doctrine of Christianity? At this rate few Divines now-a-days will escape your Censure. As well may we brand a Man with the odious Name of a Jacobite, and an Enemy to his Country, if he does not in every Prayer remember the King and Royal Family; or stigmatize him as a bad Citizen, and no Friend to the Town he lives in, if he does not constantly pray for the Magistrates, and the Good of the Borough. A Man of Candour would have enquired
whether

whether this was the Gentleman's constant Practice, before he pronounced him *beterodox, and no true Christian*; in Order to avoid the Censure of Precipitation in his Judgment. But to the Close.—This you *thought not of a Piece with the Rest of the Composition*. And why did you not think it of a Piece with the Rest of the Composition? Truly, because it introduces the very Thing you complain of the Want of; *to wit*, An Acknowledgment of the Mercy of God in CHRIST, and begging Blessings in his Name. *p. 8.*

WE now come to the Sermon; the Account whereof I shall quote from yourself.

“ HE gave out such a Subject as I could have
 “ wished, *The Truth shall make you free*. In treat-
 “ ing upon which he told us, that by Truth, in
 “ this Proposition, was meant the Gospel of CHRIST;
 “ and the Freedom this gave to Mankind was, to
 “ the best of my Remembrance, declared to consist
 “ in these four Particulars. First, the Gospel, he
 “ said, freed Mankind from the Bondage and Sla-
 “ very they were generally under to their irregular
 “ Desires and depraved Passions, by setting forth
 “ the Excellency and Rewards of Virtue and Holi-
 “ ness. Life and Immortality being peculiarly
 “ brought to Light by the Gospel, &c.

“ THE second Particular, I think, was, that the
 “ Gospel freed Mankind from the Fears and Ap-
 “ prehensions

“ prehensions they were before under, from the
 “ wavering and uncertain Opinions touching a
 “ World to come, &c. Of this I have not so
 “ much Assurance as with Respect to the Rest. If
 “ I misrepresent it, I ask the Gentleman’s Pardon.

“ THIRDLY, The Gospel, he told us, delivered
 “ us from the burdensome Rites of the *Mosaic*
 “ Institutions, &c. Under all these Heads, the
 “ Gentleman, as I thought, spoke with a good
 “ deal of Force and Propriety both of Reason and
 “ Oratory.”——What then was the Fault of this
 Sermon? “ There was not a Word of such Things
 “ as I had been wont to hear enlarged on from
 “ such-like Texts.” And pray was it the worse
 because New to you? Novelty is generally e-
 steemed a Recommendation, not only in the Dis-
 covery of Truths unknown before, but when
 Things before known are placed in a new or strik-
 ing Light. But you add, “ There was nothing
 “ of being delivered by the Gospel Dispensation
 “ from the heinous Guilt of Sin, from the tremen-
 “ dous Wrath of God, from, &c.” No! pray
 turn to the first Head again. What are our irre-
 gular Desires and depraved Passions but Sin; the
 Causes of Sin, and the Guilt of Sin? Separate
 them if you can. As to what follows——“ from
 “ the tremendous Wrath of God; from the tyran-
 “ nical Dominion of our spiritual Enemies, and
 “ the dreadful Torments of eternal Perdition;”
 These

These are all Consequences of Sin, or irregular Passion : For take away that, and I hope we need be under no Terror of the tremendous Wrath of God, of the Dominion of spiritual Enemies, or the Torments of eternal Perdition. What he said under these Heads, you own was *very true*, but you apprehend not the *whole Truth* ; yet you tell us not of one Truth that was not comprehended under them. “ But to atone for this Defect in the Minister,” you say, “ he told us in the *Fourth* Place, that the Gospel delivered us from all Subjection to the Ordinances and Decrees of Men in Matters of Religion, or to this Effect. Under this Head the Orator seemed to exert the utmost of his Faculties——The young Declaimer said a great deal to shew, that neither Princes, nor Popes, nor Councils, nor Synods, nor Fathers, nor Bishops, nor Parliaments, nor all together, had the least Right authoritatively to prescribe in MATTERS OF RELIGION ; and for himself, he said, he did in that public Manner PROTEST against all religious Prescription or Imposition whatsoever, except the Bible ; or Words to that Effect. This I thought assuming too much of the Apostle for one of his Years ; for his Appearance to me was that of a *Youth ruddy and of a fair Countenance*.” There seems here a good deal of Contempt shewn to the Man, when nothing contemptible appears in his Performance. You add, “ You took this to be the most important

“ tant, and by much the most laboured Part of
 “ the Sermon, expressed with great Force of Ora-
 “ tory, &c.” Give me leave, Sir, to ask, why
 this should be looked upon as the most important
 Part of the Sermon? I should have taken the most
 important Part to be included with great Pro-
 priety under the *first* Head. Here appears to me a
 beautiful Order and Regularity in this Discourse,
 even from your Sketch of it. The *first* Head
 respects the *whole World of Mankind*, and imports
 nothing less than their eternal Salvation in a Life
 to come. The *second* more immediately relates to
 the *Pagan World*, who laboured under great Doubts
 and Difficulties, touching that future State. The
third is peculiar to the *Jews*, who had their Deli-
 verance hereby wrought out, (all that would ac-
 cept of it,) from the laborious and expensive
 Ceremonies of the Law of MOSES. The *fourth*
 and last, has an Eye to papal Tyranny, and
 the spiritual Usurpation of later Times; from
 which every Man ought to think himself freed by
 the Gospel——The Gradation is both beautiful
 and just. But this last appeared to you the most
 important. I imagine, then, it most nearly con-
 cerned yourself. If to guess is no Crime, and I
 guess it from your own Account, you was then a
 late Convert to the Church of England; and some-
 thing was advanced under this Head, which corres-
 ponded not with your Notions of Things; and then
 it is less wonder if you view’d the Speaker, as thro’

a magnifying Glass, or heard him, as with a speaking Trumpet. However this be, you have put the Cap on, whether it fitted you or no. Accordingly you immediately proceed to inquire into the Truth of this Proposition, *That no Power on Earth hath Right to prescribe in Matters relating to Religion, and the public Worship of God.* Here you leave out the Word *authoritatively*; which I apprehend makes a considerable Difference. I may prescribe for a Patient, and therein do my Duty; but if I took upon me to enforce that Prescription by my *Authority*, when the Patient did not think proper to observe it, he would judge, and very justly too, that I greatly exceeded my Bounds. But taking the Proposition as it is, let us see how you make it appear as *false*, as *that Gentleman seemed convinced it was true.*

You begin with owning, p. 10, 11, nay proving from SCRIPTURE, from Dr. HAMMOND, HUGO GROTIUS and others, “ That no Power on Earth,
 “ since the finishing of the Canon of the Holy
 “ Scripture, hath Authority to institute New Ar-
 “ ticles of Faith, new Sacraments, or new Rules
 “ of general moral Practice, which can be obli-
 “ gatory upon the Christian Church——That if
 “ any Man, or Body of Men, shall assume to make
 “ any new Institution, as aforesaid, as of universal
 “ Obligation upon the Conscience, for which there
 “ is not a plain Declaration in holy Scripture as a
 “ Foun-

“ Foundation ; will be liable to the Anathema, or
 “ Curse, denounced by the Apostle against those who
 “ preach another Gospel.” This tends to prove
 the Truth of the Proposition, instead of its Falsity :
 For to do what is here said, is *prescribing in Mat-
 ters of Religion* with a witness. But you make a
 Distinction, and say, though nothing essential may
 be added to the Christian Faith and Worship, yet,

“ SECONDLY ; it is necessary for answering the
 “ Ends of the Christian Institution, that Churches,
 “ as Societies for the public Worship of God,
 “ should be under some Form of external Govern-
 “ ment, Administration or Polity, and AS THERE
 “ IS NO FORM GIVEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,
 “ as we shall see farther on,” [we should see into the
 New Testament for that, and not farther on] “ it
 “ becomes absolutely necessary in the Nature of
 “ Things, that the Modes of external Administration
 “ be of human Institution.” You presently add in
 the next Paragraph, *p. 12*, “ That the Almighty
 “ alone administers, and alone can administer, the
 “ Affairs of the whole World, and of the Church.”
 This is like taking it again out of the Hands of
 Men. But to pass over this, which may be an
 Oversight or Inadvertency, I should be glad to know
 the determinate Meaning of this *Form of external
 Government, Administration, or Polity*, before I allow
 these Modes to be absolutely necessary in the Nature
 of Things. If no more is intended than the Cele-
 bration,

bration of divine Service by Prayer, Preaching, and Singing of Psalms ; every Church or Society should have a Form of this Sort ; it is necessary for the Sake of Order, and to prevent Confusion. But if the Import of those Words extends farther, and includes an Hierarchy ; that is, an Order of Archbishops, Bishops, &c. or a Presbitery, consisting of Deacons, Elders, &c ; or the Interposition of a Pope, King, Cardinal, or any other spiritual or temporal Power—I deny this to be necessary at all. And to prove it, 'tis sufficient to say, that Numbers of religious Societies have existed, and do now exist, without any such Order, Interposition or Superintendency : Whereas if it was absolutely necessary in the Nature of Things that it should be so, they could not exist. Yet this seems to be the Thing aimed at : For in this and the next Page, 12 and 13, you endeavour to shew, from HOMER, SELDEN, and GROTIUS, “ That it is inconsistent
 “ with the Being and Design of Human Societies,
 “ that is, with the Nature of Things, that there
 “ should be two or more sovereign Authorities (as
 “ ecclesiastical and civil) in one and the same Society.” Yet you allow, in the same Breath, as an Objection, “ That the Christian Church did for
 “ more than three hundred Years support a Government within itself, independent of the civil
 “ Power, under which it was.” Then, if it could do it once, it may do it again ; for what has been, may be : And it is in vain to quote Authors against
 Matter

Matter of Fact. But let us examine your Quotations. 'Οὐκ ἀγαθόν πολυκοιρανίη εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω. HOM. Il. 2. *It is not good, says HOMER, that many should rule, let there be one King only.* The Poet, in that Iliad, is enumerating the Commanders of Greece, who went forth to the Siege of Troy under the Banner of AGAMEMNON ; and who were all *temporal* Princes. This Greek Line, therefore, which you thought not proper to translate, does not happen to serve your Purpose. Nor does the Comparisons of SELDEN, of two Suns in the Heavens, and two Souls in the human Body, come up to the Point. But supposing we grant the Inconsistency of two Sovereigns in a State, one for civil, the other for ecclesiastical Affairs ; (and inconsistent, I believe it is, with the Good of that State, if not with the Nature of Things) yet, the Inference you draw from it does by no means follow ; *to wit*, “ That
 “ either the civil Affairs of every Nation must be
 “ under the sovereign Direction of ecclesiastical
 “ Presidents, or that the Administration and Di-
 “ rection of ecclesiastical Affairs, so far as they are
 “ not determined by divine Authority, must be
 “ under the Direction of the civil Power.” I say neither of these Ways are necessary. There is another Expedient much preferable to either ; and that is, for the civil Governor to keep his Province, attend to and direct the civil Affairs of the Nation, and leave the Administration of ecclesiastical Affairs to the People. Particular Societies can easily form

form themselves into any Model they judge best, without Assistance from the civil Power. If they chuse a Liturgy, let them compose one for themselves, or use such a one as they like, or pray *extempore*. Thus it was in the Primitive Times of Christianity, and thus, I apprehend, it should have been at all Times. This would have prevented the unhappy Consequences that attended the contrary Practice: The insatiable Desire of Dominion in Priests and Governors—the Itch of Ceremony-making—the Persecutions for Conscience-sake—the Jails, Fines, and Imprisonments—the Terrors of the Inquisition—and the Dissentions that rend the Gallican Church at this Day. In this Case no *Kingdom would have been divided against itself* on a religious Account. Nor wou'd any Man have had opposite *Masters to serve*; none but God and his Country, whose Interests are inseparable, and whose Commands ought never to interfere.

GROTIUS you make inconsistent with himself. “Et sane eximi quicquam, &c. *No Reason can be given for exempting any Thing from the Administration of the sovereign Power.*” And immediately after you quote Chapter and Verse, “Nunc qui actus non sunt jure, &c. *Let us now see what Actions come not under the Command of the supreme Magistrate.*” What Occasion to enquire this, if no Reason can be given for exempting *any Thing*?—It follows, “*And it is plain that those Actions only are not under*
his

his Authority to command, which are repugnant to the Law of Nature [juri naturali] or any other Law of God." We shall find presently, that you depart from this Limitation of GROTIUS, and leave out in your Position *juri naturali*, the Law of Nature, or the Natural Rights of Mankind.

PAGE 15. " And here I have always taken it to
 " be a certain Rule of Conduct to all Subjects,
 " that *Every Member of a sovereign State, or*
 " *civil Society, is in Duty bound to conform to*
 " *every Institution of that State, which is not, or*
 " *(which after a strict and disinterest Examination)*
 " *does not appear contrary to some divine Precept.*
 " And under the Influence of the Truth of this
 " Position only, I have endeavoured to vindicate
 " my Conformity to the ecclesiastical Establish-
 " ment of this Nation, contrary to the Principles
 " of my EDUCATION ; declaring to the Gentle-
 " men of the Presbyterian Persuasion, and I now
 " repeat the Challenge, *in this public Manner*, (to
 " borrow an Expression from the Gentleman I
 " am now treating with) That if they, or any of
 " them, will lay their Finger upon any one Action
 " absolutely required of me, as a Lay-communi-
 " cant with the established Church, which is
 " repugnant to any Law of God, I will be a Dis-
 " senter over again."

THIS is a bold Challenge indeed!—And will nothing less than a Contradiction to some divine Precept content you? God forbid our Governors, so mild and gracious as they are, so good and virtuous, should absolutely require any Action from the Subject, repugnant to his holy Law. This would be intolerable. The Dissenters, Sir, do not, nor will, attempt so grating a Discovery, nor lay themselves open to the Lash of the civil Law; which forbids any one's writing, or even speaking, against the Book of Common-Prayer, &c. under Pain of corporal Punishment. So that if this be the Condition on which you *will become a Dissenter over again*, you will very likely continue in your present Situation. But let us sift this famous Position, under the Influence of which you endeavour to vindicate your Conformity to the ecclesiastical Establishment of this Nation, and see if it will stand the Test of REASON, and the common Light of Nature: For if the Position which influenced your Conduct be found to be ill grounded, you ought to rectify that Conduct, and *become a Dissenter over again*, whether the other Thing can be done, or cannot.

“ That every Member of a State is in Duty
 “ bound to Conform to every Institution of that
 “ State, which is not contrary to some divine Pre-
 “ cept.”——This is the Position. If a State, then,
 should institute your engaging in a War, or Crusade,
 to

to recover Palestine out of the Hands of Infidels, you will do it. If it institute your going barefooted on a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to expiate for your Crimes, you will do it. If to go to the Top of Mount Calvary * in France once a Year, or to the Tomb of THOMAS AQUINAS in England, and there pray for Souls departed, or for the King and Royal Family, in order to obtain the Pardon of your Sins, you will comply. If to make Confession of your Sins to a Priest for Pardon and Absolution, you will, on this Principle, *Conform* to that also. For it would be found difficult, perhaps, to make any of these appear contrary to a divine Precept. I fancy too, you would find some Difficulty in complying, notwithstanding your Position. And yet these are Things that have been instituted, Actions that have been required, in one State or other, if not in this of ours, and may be again done, if you attribute to them this unlimited Power. Again, if the State institute or command the Use of Holy Water ; of Salt and Spittle in Baptism ; of the Crucifix in Prayer ; of beating the Breast, turning the Body, and forty more Gesticulations in the Eucharist, they must all be done ; for shew me a divine Precept that forbids it. In short, whither will not this Doctrine lead us ? It equally serves to vindicate a Conformity to the Church of Rome,

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(which

* A Mountain two Leagues from Paris, where are six or seven little Chapels, built upon Terrasses, containing Representations of so many different Scenes of our Saviour's Life, in Figures of Stone : Hither the People are commanded to resort once a Year, to pray, &c.

(which yet you seem to be no Friend to) as it does a Conformity to the Church of England. For you will find, it may be, very few Institutions in the Former, contrary to divine Precept, any more than in the Latter. Might not the grossest Absurdities, and even Contradictions be palmed upon us, by Virtue of this Rule?—Such as that Bread is Flesh, and Wine Blood; that Three is One, and One Three; that white is black, and black, white; that three Angles of a Triangle are not equal to two right Angles: I say, may not such Things as these be taught us by the Priests, when enjoined by the State, if the Law of *Reason* is discarded from her Throne, and *Conscience* no longer suffered to sit as Umpire!

THUS have I shewn, in the Compass of a few Words, the Absurdity of this Position; under the Influence of which, and of which *alone*, you profess to justify your Conformity. Its Tendency wou'd be destructive of true Piety and Virtue; by placing something else in their Stead: And though Occasion will occur of saying more about it in the Sequel, yet does not this at once shew your Position to be ill founded, and your Conduct, consequent thereupon, to be ill advised?

I HAVE nothing to object against the Expediency, and Use, of what is argued for at *p. 16, to wit,*
 “ Abstracts and Formularies taken from the holy
 “ Scriptures,

“ Scriptures, and the approved Writings of Divines,
 “ drawn up by Men of Ability, for the Instruction
 “ of Youth ; or Dissertations on religious Subjects
 “ being publicly read, for the Encouragement of
 “ Christian Knowledge,” and that they be *recom-*
mended, if you are so desirous, by the supreme
 Authority, but not *enjoined*, in such a Manner as
 to take away Liberty from the Subjects to use them
 or no, as they think proper. The same may be
 said in regard to Forms of Prayer : Your Recom-
 mendation of which, in preference to extempore
 Prayer, takes up the four following Pages, 17, 18,
 19, 20 ; where you suppose the Forms used in the
 established Church to be more perfect and correct,
 and better adapted to the Majority of Congregations.
 In this Case I agree with you, that good precom-
 posed Forms, though short of Perfection, are pre-
 ferable to extempore Prayer, ill composed, or ill
 adapted to the State, and Capacities, of the Bulk of
 the People. On the other Hand, extempore
 Prayer, judiciously composed, properly expressed,
 and adapted to the Condition and Understanding of
 the People, and to the State of the Place and Na-
 tion in general ; proceeding from an Heart warm’d
 with the Love of God, and animated with true Devo-
 tion, is, in the Opinion of many, much preferable to
 the best prescribed Forms ; which, though ever so
 correct, must lose much of their Spirit and Efficacy,
 by a dull or frequent Repetition. Nor do I see the
 Necessity of that desultory Action of the Mind you

ſpeak of, in extempore Prayer : For if, on attending a Miniſter's Service, I find he does not, in general, offer to the Almighty any thing improper, or unbecoming, I can join with him as he goes on, in a mental Manner, or low Repetition, without any Stop or Interruption. And as to the Abilities of a Miniſter, for the proper Performance hereof, I am ſo far from thinking there are very few who have Talents equal to the Taſk, that I believe there are many, and that there would be a great many more, in Caſe the Emoluments, ſo liberally beſtow'd in the Church, were annexed to the Expectations of thoſe out of the Church, and made the Price of Merit.

P. 20, You expreſs a high Eſteem and Veneration for the Liturgy in uſe, particularly that Part of it called the *Litany*. I have a good Opinion of it too. The Compoſitions are many of 'em excellent, and carry in them an Evangelical Spirit : Yet I cannot think the preſent Liturgy ſo perfect, but that better may be formed ; if ſome lately publiſhed may not juſtly diſpute the Preference *. But your Suggestion of the Authors being inſpired, will force a Smile from the Reader. I have as much Reaſon to believe that MILTON, or SHAKESPEAR, had the like ſuper-natural Aſſiſtance, in compoſing their Works, which diſcover a vaſt Superiority of

* See the Chriſtian Liturgy, and others.

Genius : Or, that some of our modern Divines have this Aid of the holy Spirit, whose extempore Performances, if committed to Paper, might possibly be found equal to any in Print. I can name, at least, a late one, no distant Relation of mine, who composed, and published, two Volumes of Prayers ; one for the Use of Families, the other of young Christians ; both excellent in their Kind, and approved of by the Public, as appears by the Number of Editions they have each of them passed through : Yet those who attended on that Gentleman's Ministration, or ever heard his extempore Prayers, will allow, that in Copiousness of Thought, Dignity of Sentiment, Propriety of Expression, Pathos; and in almost every Respect, they excelled the Forms he published. I know another Gentleman, who prepared Forms for his own Use in the Pulpit, and laid them aside again ; as finding he was able to perform better without them. Notwithstanding, as every one has not such Talents, and as some are very unequal to the Task, it should be recommended to those who cannot Pray with Propriety *extempore*, to make use of Forms, the best they can meet with : And if the Congregation chuse to join with the Minister aloud, I have no Objection.

BUT you would have these Forms come from the civil Powers, *p.* 17. I agree with you, that Forms may be very *prudently* appointed by them for the Service of religious Assemblies, and may very prudently

be made use of by those who approve of 'em, and have need of such Helps. But here you must stop. For if once this same Authority you are so strenuous to support, begin to usurp a Power of *enforcing* the Usage of such Forms, and pretend to compel every religious Assembly to the Observance thereof, whether they approved of them or not ; this would be highly *imprudent*, to call it no worse. It would be so on Account of its unhappy Effects : Its producing a fretful, discontented Spirit among the People : A very improper Temper in a Worshipper of God ! But if the Form is of their own choosing, and free from Compulsion or Constraint, it is much more likely to be performed in a proper Manner, and to have a good Effect on the Heart and Life.

THE external Œconomy and Government of the Church is again brought upon the Tapis at p. 21. and extended to “ the several Orders of Men, in
 “ proper Subordination, as is established in the
 “ Church of *England* ; you think it is very plain
 “ the supreme Authority hath an undoubted Right
 “ to interpose and institute such Order in this Re-
 “ gard, as shall upon just Deliberation, appear
 “ most conducive to the Public Good.”

IT is far from being *very plain* that this Order is most conducive to the public Good. Whether the supreme Authority has a Right to institute such an Order, I will not take upon me to determine.
 It

It would be very assuming, in one of my Station, to pretend to fix the Limits of the supreme Authority. If it has a Right to institute an Order of Knights, why not of Bishops too? But you carry it further, and lay it down as a Thing not to be disputed, “ That the Church, as a human Society, cannot “ subsist without social Laws and Government, and “ these Laws must be under the Administration of “ some Person, or Persons, appointed for that Purpose.” The Church, as a civil Society, cannot conveniently subsist without civil or social Laws; which must be under Administrators, that is, Persons to execute, or put them in Force. But the Church, as a religious Society, may, has, and probably ever will, subsist in one Part of the World or other, without any Laws, but those of JESUS CHRIST, or any Government, but that of Harmony and Order; and consequently without requiring civil Officers set over to inspect them. So that this second Position being found false in Fact, the Arguments built upon it, and the Inferences drawn from it, fall like the Former.

BUT to be more particular. You clear the Way, by endeavouring to shew, *P.* 21, 22, “ That there “ is no Form of external Administration that can “ be said to be of divine Institution, and consequently of perpetual Use and Obligation in the “ Church of CHRIST.” This was said before in capital Letters, and it comes again at *p.* 24. It is, notwithstanding, liable to dispute. Your

Ipse dixit will not pass current with me. To know whether there is a *Form of external Administration*, as you phrase it, (for this, like the Word *Church*, is of great Latitude, and serves on all Occasions) that can be said to be of divine Institution, we must look into the New Testament itself. Tho' we cannot find there the same Form that is used in the Church of England, yet there may be found such Traces, as ought to be deemed a sufficient Foundation for the Conduct of succeeding Ages, in Matters both of Faith and Practice.

OUR Saviour, when he entered upon his Ministry, well understood the Errand he came upon. The first great Point was, to prove his divine Mission. Accordingly, after selecting twelve Men, a competent Number to be Witnesses of his Transactions, and rehearse them to the World, he commenced with working Miracles: A thing no mortal Man could do. And these were of such a Nature, as demonstrated the Uprightness of his Intentions, and his great Benevolence to Mankind. He gave Sight to the Blind; Feet to the Lamé; healed all Manner of Diseases, without the Use of Medicine; strengthened the Weak; and comforted the Distressed; solved every one's Doubts; and preached the Gospel to the Poor——Godlike Acts indeed! A Person thus accomplished, could not fail to draw after him Crowds of People, with Minds prepared to receive whatever should come from him. He then stood
upon

upon an Eminence, and at one Time delivered the best System of Ethics ever divulged to the World, in the Presence of a Multitude of People *. These Doctrines our Lord inculcated under various Forms, repeated at different Times, and in different Places; not only in the open Fields, but in the Temple and Synagogues of the Jews; which he scrupled not constantly to make use of; never attempting by his Authority to make any Alteration in the Forms then in use. But his Example, and that of his Apostles, which was to be the Pattern of future Times, shewed—that the Rites and Ceremonies, attending the Mosaic Law, were no longer necessary—that fasting, washing of Hands and Cups, long Prayers in the Streets, tything Mint, Annise and Cummin, was of no avail whilst the Heart was impure—that the weighty, the most important Matters of the Law, were Mercy, Justice and Faith †—that the Time was come, when God was to be found equally in all Places, and worshipped in Spirit and in Truth ‡—that in vain did they worship him, who taught Doctrines of human Institution, who approached him with the Mouth, and honoured him with Lip-service, whilst the Heart was absent ||—that the true Characteristic of his genuine Disciples was that of loving one another; for Love, he said, (SO UNIVERSAL IS THAT AMIABLE PRINCIPLE,) is the Fulfilling of the Law. Prayer to the Father of all, he shewed
was

* MAT. ch. 5, 6, 7. † MAT. 23. 23. ‡ JOHN 4. 24. § MAT. 15. 8, 9.

was of general Obligation, by being frequent in it himself, and composing a Model. He preached likewise, or expounded the Scriptures then in being, and joined in singing of Hymns. Such was the Form of our Lord's Administration. It seems to partake very much of a spiritual Nature, and consequently to be internal. He taught, he preached, he prayed, he praised God ; and thus should we do.

LET us now see how the Apostles acted, when they came upon the Stage, and what their *Form of Administration* was.

IN the tenth Chapter of MATTHEW's Gospel, the sixth of MARK's, and the ninth of LUKE's, we have the Commission that was given to the Apostles when they were first sent out ; the Powers they were invested with, their Habit and Behaviour described. *Go not ye among the Gentiles, and into the Cities of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel. And as ye pass on, PREACH to them, saying, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Cure the Sick, cleanse the Leper, raise the Dead, cast out Devils ; freely ye have received, freely give. Take no Gold, nor Silver, nor Coin in your Purses : Neither Scrip for your Journey, nor Shoes on your Feet, nor Staff in your Hand, nor Bread : For the Labourer is worthy of his Support. Into whatsoever House ye enter, salute them, saying, Peace be unto this House. If any in it are worthy, your*
Peace

Peace will come unto them; if not, it will return unto you again. Behold, I send you out as Sheep among Wolves. Be ye therefore wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves. This is the Charge our Lord gave to his Apostles; those great Christian Bishops. As if he had said, speaking in the Language of these Times——“ My Friends and Followers, your first grand Concern is with the Jews. Let my ancient chosen People have the first Tidings of a Saviour, their promised Messiah. Tell them that CHRIST is indeed come; and that Salvation is now offered them. Let that be the Subject of your Ministry. Go——and to give a Sanction to your Doctrine, exercise the mighty Powers I invest you with. Do the very Works that I myself have done; and thus demonstrate by your Actions, that your Authority is divine. Liberally have I imparted Talents unto you; as freely do you bestow your Blessings. But make no sort of Provision for your Journey. Go not in the Pomp and Splendor of this World. Carry no Mitre on your Head, nor Crozier in your Hand. Let the Goodness of your Doctrine, the Purity and Simplicity of your Manners, be your Equipage; and the Souls you convert, your Retinue. If they receive you, and embrace your Doctrine, you will doubtless be maintained; if they do not, you are but as you were, ready to enter another City, and to try your Success there. Always remembering that I send you forth, not as Wolves amongst Sheep, to tear and fleece the Flock;

but

but as Sheep amongst Wolves, harmless and inoffensive. And as great Skill, and Judgment, and Delicacy, are requisite, to deal with the different Tempers of Mankind; let the Wisdom of the Serpent be added to the Innocency of the Dove, and united in your Characters.”——

IN this plain, simple, and candid Manner, did our great Law-giver lay down the Plan of their Operations; fortifying their Breasts, at the same Time, with Courage, Firmness and Resolution, to withstand the Rage of Enemies, and to endure with Patience the Usage they must expect to meet with; and this on Consideration of what he himself should suffer; intimating, that they could bear no greater Hardships than their Leader bore——that the Disciple was not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord——that they might think they came well off, if the Disciple was treated as his Master, and the Servant fared no worse than his Lord. MATT. ch. 10.

PRESENTLY after we read of seventy more being sent out in the same Manner, and with the very same Instructions.

THE last Charge that CHRIST delivered to his Apostles was in these Words: All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye, therefore, and disciple, or instruct all Nations; baptizing them
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in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : *Teaching them* [διδασκοντες] *to do all Things whatsoever I have commanded you* *. In St. MARK it is : Go throughout all the World, and *preach the Gospel to every Creature* †. St. LUKE says: He opened their Minds to understand the Scriptures, and said, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved CHRIST to suffer, and on the third Day to rise again ; that in his Name Amendment of Life, or Repentance, and Forgiveness of Sin should be preached unto all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem ‡.

THESE are some of our Saviour's last Words ; and let us see how his Orders were executed.

THE Apostles staid in Jerusalem until they received the Effusion of the Holy Ghost, and were in the mean time, in the Temple, *praising God, and giving of thanks* ||. When they were properly prepared by a Skill in Languages, and other Gifts, they began with preaching this important and fundamental Truth, That the Person whom they (the Jews) had with wicked Hands crucified and slain, but whom God had raised again, was no other than the promised Messiah, the expected Saviour of the World. This was supported with such strong Arguments, and enforced so powerfully, as quickly gained Assent. Three thousand were convinced at once, and anxiously desired to know what they had

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* MAT. 28. 18, 19, 20. † MARK 16. 15. ‡ LUKE 24. 46, 47.
|| LUKE 24. 53.

to do. *Repent, says PETER, and reform, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of JESUS, for the Pardon of your Sins. For to you the Promise appertains, and to your Children, and others still more remote, even whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord our God.* These were the leading Doctrines the Apostles taught and preached : CHRIST crucified, and a Reformation of Manners. They were constant in Prayer also, and sung Hymns of Praise*. This was the *Form of their Administration.* Plain and easy. They thought good to lay no greater Burthen upon the People, than such Things as were necessary ; nor to use more Ceremonials, than what were conducive to Piety and Virtue. The People followed their Example. They attended to the Doctrines of the Apostles ; with mutual Participation breaking of Bread, and giving of Thanks †. This was the Form of Worship amongst the first Christians : To pray, to preach, or expound the Scriptures, and to sing Praises‡. And this Form has continued in the World down to this Day ; though with some Variations, if they may not, more properly, be called ADULTERATIONS.

THE Italians first fouled these pure Streams : And they did it by the very Maxims which you, Sir, have laid down !——The civil Powers, under the plausible Pretence of supporting the Church, took

* Acts 6. 4, & seq. † Acts 2. 42. ‡ See JUSTIN MARTYR's Account of the primitive Worship. Apolog. 2.

took upon themselves the Direction of whatever appertained to it. This was an Usurpation : The Consequences of which, though not felt at first, were in time bad enough. It is needless to enumerate them. Few Persons are unacquainted with what has been, and is still done, in the Church of Rome, where a too strict Attendance upon and Attachment to a numerous Train of Externals in Religion, has tended to weaken the Regard due to real internal Piety, to solid and substantial Virtue. The pious Reformers of this Nation reduced the Number of Articles of Faith, which had been added to those of the Gospel : They discarded an useless Load of Rites and Ceremonies that had been introduced into the Worship of God ; and if we consider the Prejudices the Mind of Man labours under, and the Fondness of the Vulgar for what Custom has made familiar, they performed Wonders. But, whether from the Weight of the Load, or from what other Reason, they left some still remaining, which seem foreign to Christianity, an Augmentation of the Faith and Laws of CHRIST, and a deviation from the Practice of the First Christians. They threw off the Roman Yoke it is true ; but it was by putting on another. The King's Honour was concerned, or rather his Love ; and as they had his Assistance in doing it, his Majesty thought he had as good a Right to be Head
of

of the Church as the Pope. And in this he thought justly ; neither of them having any Right of that Sort at all : For, if the former was an Usurpation, this was no less so. There were not wanting, at that Time, Men who saw thro' this Delusion : Saw that they had only changed Masters ; a foreign One for one near at home. They saw, too, that the Reformation was imperfect in other respects. They endeavoured to carry it farther, as other Nations had done, and render the Worship of God more pure and spiritual, and bring it nearer to the Original Standard. Hence they were called PURITANS, by those who differed from them ; these latter thinking their Notions *too pure*. In Time, however, they became a considerable Body ; and thro' many Difficulties and Persecutions, which they nobly endured, at last gained their Point : If not for the whole Nation, at least for themselves ; and established a Church, or more properly a Form of Worship, agreeable to their own Sentiments. This Form, which the reformed abroad observed, consisted simply of Prayer, preaching the Word, and Praise ; with the Administration of the Lord's Supper, and Baptism ; enjoining nothing as an Object of Faith, but what every one found, or believed he found, in the Word of God ; nor of Practice, but what he was satisfied to be consistent therewith. This is the Origin of our modern Dissenters, and this their Practice ; Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists,

Anabaptists, or by whatever other Stile or Title they are called ; all going upon that excellent Principle, *Independency of the Civil Powers*, and the *Rights of private Judgment and Practice*, in Matters of Religion. A Principle you have not been able to overthrow, with all your Arguments and Quotations. And how should you ? for it is founded in NATURE ! Notwithstanding, you endeavour to do it, by more Quotations from GROTIUS and PUFFENDORF, p. 24, 25, 26. In regard to which it may be observed by the Way, that whenever a Sovereign usurps a Power that does not belong to him, there are never wanting Men, and learned Men too, to speak and write in his favour. This Truth was notoriously verified in some late Reigns. When the Heads of a royal Family, since discarded, attempted to render themselves absolute, and their Government over this Nation despotic ; how was Passive Obedience and Non-resistance issued from the Press, yea, even bellowed from the Pulpit ! Doctrines that every Body now is ashamed to avouch ; notwithstanding your Positions, your Arguments, and Quotations lead to them. Let us again examine your Quotations.

GROTIUS, who I believe was a very good, as well as learned Man, is more cautious in his Expressions than you would have him be. “ *Summæ Potestatis*,

Potestatis, &c. We say that the Authority of the Sovereign Power extends not only to prophane or civil Affairs, but to sacred also.” This is brought in Confirmation of what you just before said, namely, “that the Form of Church Government or Policy, as well as other Things of a public Nature appertaining to the good of the whole Community, is to be determined by the Advice and Consultation of Men properly qualified and appointed, but under the sole Authority of the supreme Civil Power.”

MOST People, I judge, will agree with GROTIUS, that sacred Matters may appertain to the Cognizance of the Civil Power ; and this so far as they are connected with Civil Affairs, and tend to the good of the Community. A Sovereign, who has the good of the Subject at Heart, will take Care of the Morals of his People, as well as of their Property ; as the security of the former tends to their good, no less than the latter. But to enjoin a Form of Worship to be observed by the People, or to create a number of Men, ever so well qualified, to draw up, and *enforce*, with the *least penal Sanction*, the observance of a Form, disliked, disapproved of, by the People ; which they hold *not to be agreeable to the Nature of the Thing* ; less acceptable to the Deity, or inconsistent with their own Rights and Privileges—This, I say, can never tend to the good of the Community : It
never

never did, never will, nor ever can. We prove it from Facts. When the Family before mentioned endeavoured to erect an Hierarchy in Scotland, and introduce the English Liturgy into that Church, what Mischiefs did not ensue ! What Hardships did that unhappy People undergo on that very Occasion ! The Arts, the Stratagems, nay, the Persecutions and Cruelties exercised by those crowned Heads, to gain these Points, History informs us of : History records the horrid Scene to their eternal Infamy ! Men, whose Office it was to be Protectors of the People, and to preserve the Peace of the Public, became the greatest Breakers of it ! Confusion took the Place of Order ; Cruelty sat in the Seat of Mercy ; Tyranny usurped the Throne of Liberty ; Barbarity banished the soft Emotions of Humanity ; False Zeal extirpated all Tendernefs and Pity ; the sacred Rights of Conscience were trampled upon, and the Christian Church filled with most unchristian Evils ! But they prevailed not——The Scots nobly withstood, patiently suffered, persevered, and regained their Liberty. Their Church Government is liable to great Exceptions and Inconveniences, on account of the Authority exercised ; yet it is their own Choice, and it is so far free : Nor would they have thought of procuring an Act from the Civil Powers, in their Favour, at the time of the Union of the two Kingdoms, if there had not been a possibility, that the like tragic

Scenes, their Eyes had so lately beheld, might sometime be acted over again. For every crowned Head owes Protection and Support to the Subject, in all their Rights and Privileges.

PUFFENDORF, you say, discusses this Question, “ Whether it is requisite the outward Government of the Christian Religion be lodged with the King, with the Body of the Clergy, or with one Particular, independent of the supreme Magistracy.” *p. 25.* I maintain that it is not requisite it should be lodged with any of them. The mere putting such a Question, shews the Pretensions of all of ’em to be doubtful. And in truth, the Chancellor, if he is not inconsistent with himself, is of the same Opinion : For he says, at the End of your Quotation, “ It cannot be denied, that as every one is bound by Nature to SERVE GOD, so also it is at the same Time in his Power, to perform the outward Ceremonies of Religion, in such a Manner as he believes most pleasing to God.” It is surprising you durst venture to quote a Sentence so much against yourself. For, if it is in every One’s Power to perform the outward Ceremonies of Religion in the Manner he believes most pleasing to God, it cannot be in the Power of any other, to oblige him to perform them differently. You add, “ This natural Right of every One to “ judge of, and chuse, the Manner of his paying “ his Homage to the most High, is what I have “ often heard alledged by the Dissenters, as the “ most

“ most indubitable and UNALTERABLE Right of
 “ every Man. Whereas I have before proved that
 “ this is one of those Things which is not deter-
 “ mined by any natural or revealed Law, which
 “ the Almighty hath given to Mankind.” PUF-
 FENDORF’s Authority, which you have cited above,
 maintaining that every Man has a Power, or Right,
 to worship God in such a Manner as he thinks most
 pleasing to him, is also a sufficient Answer to this
 Part of your Argument. As to revealed Law, it
 is there plainly enough determined in favour of
 the right of private Judgment.

JESUS CHRIST, the great Author of Revelati-
 on, was careful to make no Ineroachment on this
 natural Right. He, who had the Power, if any
 one ever had, to enforce by his Authority an Af-
 sent to his Doctrines ; or, by corporal Punish-
 ments exact Obedience to his Precepts ; never
 once attempted it. On the contrary, he rebuked
 his Disciples, yet unacquainted with the Nature
 of his Religion, who proposed the calling for Fire
 from Heaven, to chastise the obstinate. And so
 far were he, and the Apostles, from referring any
 thing to the decision of the Civil Magistrate, that
 they did not so much as interest the Governors in
 their behalf, on any Occasion. *The Princes of the
 Gentiles exercise Dominion, and they who are great
 exercise Authority ; but it shall not be so among You,*
 says

says our Saviour. *Mat. 20. 25.* Here now is a Divine Law, as strong, I think, as Words can make it, against great Men, Princes, or Potentates, exercising any Dominion or Authority in the Church of CHRIST. If St. PAUL once appealed to CÆSAR, who was possessed of the supreme Sovereign Power, it was an Appeal from an inferior Tribunal to a superior one, in an Affair of a civil Nature ; to wit, a false Imprisonment. On the other hand, the Apostles, as well as our Lord himself, frequently appealed to the Judgment and Consciences of the People, for the Truth and Justice of what they delivered ; which they left to their Decision, without putting any Constraint upon their Thoughts or Actions. These Instances, which are numerous enough both in the Gospels and Epistles, shew, that the Vulgar had a Capacity sufficient for judging in the Case, and a Right to follow that Judgment.

MORE Quotations are brought from PUFFENDORF, *p. 26*, which are either foreign to the Question, or contradict the Sentence just mentioned. And when an Author begins to contradict himself, it is time to give him up. But there is another Quotation from GROTIUS may require consideration, as it is ushered in twice. “ *Duo sunt genera actuum, &c. There are two Kinds of imperial Acts, which do not appertain to the governing Powers, viz. to command what God hath forbidden, and to forbid what*

what God hath commanded. " What GROTIUS says here is doubtless true ; but as you observed on another Occasion, it is not the *whole* Truth. For there are certainly many imperial Acts which appertain not to the governing Power, concerning which there is no express Law of God to be found. In general, to *command* any thing, in Religion, to be held as a necessary part of our Duty, which God has *not commanded*, can never come within the Verge of that Tribunal. This is so clear a Truth, that those who cannot assent to it at first View, will scarcely be convinced by a multiplicity of Words. It is a Truth that will be found to hold good in an arbitrary, as well as a limited, Monarchy. So that this favourite Position selected from GROTIUS, is greatly defective, and therefore ought not to be admitted as a complete Maxim in Politics.

CALVIN and HOOKER are brought in, *p.* 27 and 28. One would have thought it superfluous to call in these Divines to your Aid, after the great Ones who have gone before. But these are your Authorities. Was I disposed to quote Authors, I might have brought great and learned Men to my Assistance, and some, possibly, from your own Church. But Authors, how great soever, are not infallible, nor to be followed implicitly. I pin my Faith on no Man's Sleeve. My Authorities are,
the

the NEW TESTAMENT, MATTERS OF FACT, and REASON ; or the Understanding that God has given us. These are powerful Weapons ; and well managed, may be found, without other resource, abundantly sufficient to answer whatever you have erroneously advanced. But let us see what those Gentlemen do for you.

“ THE very great and learned CALVIN, you
 “ say, (*p.* 27) maintains the same Thing ; whose
 “ Arguments I have not room to transcribe.
 “ Whoever hath a Mind, may find them in his
 “ three or four first Chapters of his fourth Book
 “ of Institutions. ” If you have no room to
 transcribe his Arguments, I have no room to answer them ; and believe I shall never have a Mind to look into his Book of Institutions. My Book of Institutions is the BIBLE. I admit of no Institutions, in Religion, that are not to be found therein : Of which, if I think myself incapable of judging, we have Divines nearer home, living ones too, with whom to advise ; as good Judges, perhaps, as ever CALVIN was. I speak it without Disrespect to his Memory. CALVIN was a great, a learned, and, it is hoped, a good Man : But one Act of his stands upon Record, which is no Proof, no Instance, of either one or the other ; that was, his causing SERVETUS, an expert Anatomist and eminent Physician, to be put to Death as an Heretic, for the honest Exercise of his rational

tional Faculties ; thus at once sacrificing a fellow Creature, and extinguishing one of the Lights in Medicine ! An Action both shocking and unjustifiable.

“ HOOKER declares against the Supposition of
 “ the particular Divine Authority of any one
 “ Scheme of Ecclesiastical Polity or Administration ; and asserts, That all of that kind arise
 “ only from the general Obligation we are under
 “ from Nature and Revelation to be obedient to
 “ the Laws of those Societies to which we belong. ” — HOOKER should have added,
 That the Obligation ceases, whenever those Laws interfere with the Laws of God, or with the natural Rights and religious Liberties of Mankind. It was an Infringement of these, by unreasonable Impositions, which gave occasion to those many Debates you complain of in the next Paragraph, *p.* 28, which so distracted our Church and Nation throughout the last Century.

IN Page 29 you commend the Presbyterianism of Scotland, which may, you say, amongst a People generally under the influence of the Virtues before mentioned (to wit, a pure and unfeigned Faith, with universal Holiness of Life, Sincerity, Piety and Charity,) pretty well answer the same Ends as Episcopalianism, or the Establishment in England. But you think this last “ *the best that ever was in any Nation, since our Saviour's Time.* ”

This

This is a high Character indeed. But suppose another should say as much of the Church of Scotland; another of the Church of Holland; another of that of Rome; others, again, that it would be better if the Civil Powers were not to make any Church Establishment at all: Whose Judgment must we concur in? Can you expect yours to be preferred to that of a thousand others, equally learned and judicious? Surely not. It should be considered by Gentlemen who have so high an Opinion of the Church of England, that it is a Church *sui generis*; that it is (to compare great Things with small) a Noun Substantive, which stands by itself; none of the reformed Churches abroad being built upon the same Model with that of England. Now if this last be *the best that ever was in any Nation since our Saviour's Time*, (and if since our Saviour's Time, we may safely add, before his Time,) I say, if it be the best that ever was, it is a Mystery to me, how none of the Reformed abroad came to hit upon it. How the great and learned CALVIN, whom you admire, and pay such Deference to; the renowned LUTHER, BEZA, MELANCTON, and other noble Worthies, who first led on the Dawn of Reformation, should none of them think of an Hierarchy, and other Characteristics that distinguish the English Church. That neither in Germany, where the Reformation first began, nor in France, Holland, or Switzerland, where it made such Progress; nor even in Scotland, where the

Example

Example was before their Eyes, any one should fall upon, or think of copying, so plain a Scheme for establishing the best Church that ever was in being. So excellent, as that none of the Churches just mentioned, nor even that of Geneva, should be compared to her. How came England to be thus wise in ecclesiastical Affairs, above her Neighbours ? It would be more modest, methinks, to suppose our Neighbours to have as much Wisdom as we have ; as well to understand the nature of Religion, as to find out a proper Form of worshipping God. Has national Prejudice, which they say is apt to run high, no share in ascribing this superlative Knowledge to ourselves ? If the Church of England is so very tenacious of her Superiority, let her observe how much the Majority is against her ; when no other Nation upon Earth, nor perhaps two thirds even of her own enlightened Country, think, in that Respect, as she does. This must be a mortifying Circumstance, where Pride has any Place. 'Tis true, to have a King at the head of a Church, an English Senate on it's side ; Nobles, Lords and Gentlemen in the Interest : Bishops and Archbishops for it's Officers ; Riches, Titles and Honours at command, are great Sanctions ; and, with Music, and many sumptuous Trappings, apt to dazzle the Minds of Beholders, and heighten the Opinion of it's Advocates. On the other hand, to embark in the Cause of pure Religion, and undefiled ; to admire her in her
naked

naked Beauty ; to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, acknowledging JESUS, the Son of God, as sole Lord and Head of his Church, tho' destitute of the pompous Pageantry of worldly Honours, and the gay Ornaments of gorgeous Apparel, must yield to a pious Soul that secret satisfaction that the World cannot give——I would not derogate from the Church's real Merit, nor say a Word to widen the Breach ; rather help to heal the Divisions that the Rigour of her Masters formerly introduced. It has its Excellencies. An honest and upright Member of the Church of England, is a respectable Character in every Country : Numbers of such the Church of England can now boast of ; and it is their own Fault, not the Church's, if they support it not. But whenever a Son of her's departs from those virtuous Principles you so well enumerated, wherein the true Dignity of the Character consists, he will fall as low in the Eyes of others, as ever he was exalted in his own. Here then let us rest. Let us sum up the whole in a few Words, and conclude it thus ; that that Church is the best Church, whose Members are under the strongest Influence of the Virtues before mentioned ; a pure and unfeigned Faith, with universal Holiness of Life, Sincerity, Piety, and Charity, let it's external Œconomy, Polity, or Administration, be what it will.

BUT

BUT you descend to particulars, and observe,
p. 29, “ that the Modes and Ceremonies of the
 “ Church, which have been the Occasion of great
 “ and mischievous Quarrels, might easily have
 “ been avoided, by an attention to public Utility.
 “ For Instance, of what great Moment is it, you
 “ ask, whether those who by Office preside in re-
 “ ligious Assemblies, appear in white, black, or
 “ red ; or that their Vestments be of this or that
 “ Cut or Shape ? And as there is no original
 “ Excellence in any one of these Differences, what
 “ can hinder but that the supreme Civil Magi-
 “ strate, or Magistracy, whose Office it is to
 “ regulate Things of an indifferent Nature, for
 “ the Peace and Convenience of the Public, may,
 “ by his Authority, ordain that which on Con-
 “ sideration and Advice shall be judged best, to
 “ be of general Use ? ” I answer, it is of
 Moment only to the Assembly itself ; and there-
 fore they alone ought to have it the Way and
 Manner they judge most suitable ; and not the
 Magistrate, whose Office is not to regulate, much
 less enforce Things of this Nature : Indifferent I
 call them not, for they have alter’d their Nature,
 and are no longer indifferent, when enforced by
 public Authority. You add, “ and in particu-
 “ lar may appoint, that he who reads the public
 “ Service should be vested in white, and he who
 “ stands to instruct the People appear in black,
 “ without

“ without ascribing any Sanctity, or divine Au-
 “ thority, to either ; and without believing that
 “ the Prayers and Instructions receive any Efficacy
 “ from the different Habit of the Minister.
 “ But as the Weakness of many People is prone to
 “ imagine excellencies in mere Distinctions, it is
 “ necessary to prevent the ill Consequences which
 “ might spring from such Weakness, by fixing all
 “ such Ceremonies.”

WITH what kind of Logic this Paragraph closes,
 I am at a Loss to conceive. How the ill Consequences
 of things are prevented by fixing them, is quite
 above my Comprehension. I have heard of the
 Gout in the Head or Stomach being prevented
 or carried off, by fixing it on the Joints. In no
 other Case, I believe, is the Cure of a Disease
 attempted by fixing it on the Habit. The Cure,
 by *Prevention*, in bodily Disorders, is by *removing*
 of the Cause. But you are for *preventing* this
 mental Malady, by *fixing* the Cause ! I should
 have thought the leaving those Ceremonies
unfixt, a much more likely Means of accomplishing
 the End. For surely if there be any ill Consequences
 following those Distinctions, they must be increased
 by fixing them, rather than prevented.

BUT give me leave to say, that it is not the
 Habit of the Minister alone, it is not a single
 Ceremony only, that is attended with these ill
 Consequences, but a Multitude of them, and an
 Obligation

gation to their Performance. For example; (to ask a few Questions in my Turn) Why should I be obliged to any particular Posture of the Body in celebrating divine Worship? Why to stand when one Part of the sacred Canon is read, and sit at another; as though one was of superior Value and Authority to another? Why be obliged to bow at the Word JESUS, when I conceive the Command in Scripture, *in the Name of Jesus every Knee shall bow*, has a different Signification? Why to kneel at the Communion Table, when I judge it more agreeable to the nature of a Supper, and the Practice of the Apostles, to take the Sacrament in a Table Posture? Why, to add no more, must I employ Sponsors in Baptism, when I hold myself alone to be responsible for the Education of my Children? An observance of these, and many other Ceremonials in Religion, (had they more Propriety in them than they have) will naturally weaken Peoples Attention to the Thing itself.

You then talk, *p.* 30, of Hazard arising from a Parity of Influence and Authority amongst Ministers, which is prevented by a “ Subordination, “ whereby the Conduct and particular Actions of “ all, may be ultimately liable to the Review, “ Censure and Animadversions of a few of distinguished Excellence in the Church.” But from Experience we may observe, that greater
Hazard

Hazard arises from a Subordination in the Ministry, than from a Parity. For, is not this Subordination the Offspring of Popery?—A sketch of Policy in Priests; calculated to preserve Power to the Prelates, to domineer over the People. It was for the Emolument of the Clergy, at the Expence of the Laity. It served the Interest of the former, but never tended to the Good of the latter. It was a Temptation to Pride, Haughtiness and sinister Views, on the one Hand; and the source of Envy, Slavery and Dependence on the other. These have been it's ill Consequences: Whereas no such Effects have followed, where Ministers were under a Parity of Influence and Authority. Their Influence indeed should extend, and generally does encrease, in proportion to their Talents, their Abilities, and Usefulness. And Authority they should have none, but to discharge the Duties of their Function. If they desire more, let them seek it in the Love and Affection of the People; by an humane, generous, tender Behaviour towards them; by a readiness to do them every good Office; by composing Animosities, adjusting Differences, resolving Doubts; by visiting the Sick and Afflicted, comforting the Distressed, seeking out and raising depressed Merit; by vindicating the injured Character, and embracing every Opportunity of discountenancing Vice and Ill-nature, and inspiring the Mind with the noblest Sentiments of Honour and Virtue!

Acts

Acts like these will raise their Character, their Influence, their Authority, to a higher Pitch, and be the spring of more solid Satisfaction to themselves and the World, than any Dignity or Preferment in a Church can possibly produce.

If this Subordination, this Subjection in the ministerial Order, would secure the good Conduct of the Clergy, it would indeed do something ; but alas ! the Behaviour of many of our Clergy are too plain Proofs of the contrary. Nay, it is so far from answering this End, that Ministers of the dissenting Persuasion, who had lost their Reputation with their own Class, by the depravity of their Lives, have been admitted into Orders in the established Church. Moreover, this Subordination, this Subjection in the Ministry, has no Foundation in Scripture ; and it is even contrary to the Spirit and Tenor of the Gospel, and the Practice of the Apostles and First Christians. *Ye know*, says our Saviour to his Disciples, *that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise Dominion, and they that are great exercise Authority ; BUT IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONGST YOU : But whosoever will be great among You, let him be your Minister ; and whosoever will be Chief among You, let him be your Servant : Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.* * Again, JESUS spake to the Multitude, and to his Disciples. *The*

* Matt. 20, 26, &c.

*Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's Seat—they love the uppermost Rooms at Feasts, and the chief Seats in the Synagogues, and Greetings in the Markets, and to be called of Men RABBI, RABBI ! BUT BE NOT YE CALLED RABBI ; for one is your Master, even Christ, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN. And call no Man your FATHER, upon Earth ; for one is your Father, who is in Heaven : Neither be ye called MASTERS, for one is your Master, even CHRIST. But he that is greatest among you, shall be your SERVANT. **

I AGREE with you in recommending it to those who have the dispensation of public Rewards, that they would settle them so as best to promote a general Emulation with respect to Learning, Virtue and Piety ! Qualifications of the greatest importance. But how this will make *the Settlement of the external OEconomy of the Church more easy and obvious*, is not easily perceived. You are persuaded, however, p. 31, *that on the prevalence of such a Disposition, our present Establishment would be troubled with very few Dissenters.* Why troubled pray ? If the Establishment do not trouble the Dissenters, the Dissenters will not trouble the Establishment. If it is a trouble to you, that there are of the one ; it is no trouble to me, that there are of the other. On the contrary, it is the Opinion of many, that 'tis better for the Nation there are both. Emulation is a Spur to many

* MATT. 23.

Virtues ; and were we all of one Church, or compelled to one, we might chance to lose that Spur : As Sir JOSEPH DANVERS, a worthy Member of the House of Commons, wisely observed, *It is a good Thing to have two Shops*. The Simile is somewhat plain, but very just. In Countries where there is but *one*, the Priests monopolise Religion, and make a Trade of it.

AT Page 31, Toleration comes upon the Carpet. What is said about it, is a little confused ; but it closes with an heavy Charge against the Dissenters : A Charge so flagrant, unjust, and improbable withal, as many of your own Brethren of the Church will be ready to condemn you for. The bare Repetition is sufficient to expose it. The following Motives are assigned as the Causes of their dissent from the Church of England—*An obstinate, undebated Prejudice—Interest—a Desire of becoming of more Importance—a Spirit of Opposition and Censoriousness*. This is very censorious indeed ! I am sorry, Sir, you so ill Understand the Principles of the Dissenters : Appear so ignorant of their Writings, and so little versed in the English History, as to publish Causes of their Dissent, so false, scandalous, and even base : Motives the whole Body of Dissenters will scorn and detest !—What cou'd induce you thus to abuse so many of your Countrymen !—If one cannot be too tender of the Character of a single Person ;

what

what Caution should be used, when the Reputation of Thousands is at Stake? And will not the Charge, with equal Justice, lie against Protestants in general, who dissented from the Church of Rome? The Motives of both, I apprehend, were good and just; *to wit*, a Resolution to shake off all spiritual Tyranny, and unlawful Usurpation—a love of Liberty, and a determination to maintain their Ground against Priestly Imposition, Incroachments on the natural Rights of Mankind, and Infringements of their sacred Privileges—an ardent Desire of purging the Christian Religion of gross Adulterations, and an heterogeneous Mixture—a pious Intention of rendering the Worship and Service of God more pure, spiritual, internal, and more resembling its Divine Original. A noble Cause indeed! Motives laudable, just, and glorious! A Cause that God has prospered, and which all the Machinations of its Adversaries have not been able to overturn or destroy.

THE Dissenters were at first, and for a long space of Time, the Objects of public Hatred; a despised, persecuted People. They suffered, greatly suffered, in their Persons, Families, and Fortunes. How, then, did they seek their temporal Interest; or which Way could that be a Motive of their dissent; when the Profits, the Honours, the Emoluments of this World were
all

all against them? When, at one Time, above two Thousand pious, conscientious Divines, were suspended, turned out of their Churches and Livings; and numbers of others, for worshipping God according to their Consciences, were deprived of their Estates, fined, confined, harrassed out of their Lives, or forced, with their Pastors, to seek an Afylum in Banishment; and found, with the savage Indians of *America*, that Rest they could not meet with at Home! * What human Heart would not dissolve with Pity and Concern, to see such Victims fall a Sacrifice to Tyranny and lawless Power; or rather not fire with just Resentment, to see such Villainy transacted, Religion thus perverted, and Bigotry triumphant! Was this their Virtue, or contempt of Life? Say, was it not heroic Virtue, thus to give up all that is valued in this World for Peace of Mind, liberty of Conscience, an Interest with God, and a Seat in Heaven? What shining Examples to the present Times, of Patience, Fortitude, and a love of Liberty! And what can be more unjust, and dishonourable, than to revile and calumniate such truly noble and respectable Characters as these!

* An Estimate was published of near eight Thousand Protestant Dissenters who had perished in Prison in the Reign only of *Charles II.* And their Losses in Estates and Trades, was valued at upwards of two Millions Sterling.

IF, in the present Times, Dissenters are more fortunate, in having the Countenance and Protection of the Ruling Powers, yet, do not Church Preferments run in another Channel ? Does not Antipathy still, in many Places, run high against them ? Are they not too often slandered and abused, and tho' not openly persecuted, yet secretly wounded in their tenderest Part, their Characters and Reputation ? How then is it the *Interest*, the temporal Interest I mean, of any one now to join them ? Or which Way can they, by that Means, *become of more Importance* ? It can be no Man's Interest to be a Hypocrite in Religion. As it will lessen his Character, it must lessen his Importance too. If you, Sir, are sincere, in leaving the Dissenters, it would be more candid to suppose, that I, and others, are sincere in adhering to them. If you left them out of a Principle of Duty, Duty to your King and civil Governors, as you say, and as I believe you did, and from a persuasion of that Obligation superceding all other Considerations ; I cleave to them from a Principle of Duty to God, to myself, my Friends and my Posterity ; by serving God in the Manner I judge best, and transmitting to future Generations the Possession of that religious Liberty we ought always to enjoy. To sum up all in a Word, each of us, 'tis to be hoped, follow the Dictates of our Reason and Consciences, and do
that

that which, after mature Consideration, we judge to be best and fittest in the nature of Things. What room, then, is there for Blame on either Side ? Let us study rather to bear and forbear, to LOVE as BRETHREN, and make genteel Allowances for the different Extent of human Understanding.

YOUR Discourse, p. 32 and 33, tends to shew, as far as I can understand it, (for 'tis not very easily understood) that the Dissenters, whom you call *Saints*, and *gloomy Saints*, pay a greater Regard to, or put a superior Value upon, the Observance of religious Duties, (which you compare to the tything of Mint, Annise and Cumming) than to moral Purity, Truth, Righteousness, Humility and Charity. I have always, hitherto, counted these last to be Duties of the religious Kind : For, does not the word Religion comprehend, in it's Definition, the Obligations we are under to our Neighbours and Ourselves, as well as those we are more especially under to God ? But, allowing this Distinction ; are not the Dissenters as strict Observers of the social and personal Virtues, as they are of the divine Ones, or the immediate Worship of God ? Do they not pay as great a Regard to ALL of them, as others do ? Are they not as sincere Friends, as peaceable Neighbours, as good Subjects, as kind Masters, as honest Ser-

vants,

vants, as modest, charitable, sober, temperate, and chaste, as the rest of Mankind? On the other Hand, do not the Episcopalians observe, and pay a strict Regard to more Rites and Ceremonies, in their Way of Worship, which may be properly compared to *the tything Mint, Annise and Cumming*, than the Presbyterians? They do. Therefore this is really, as you conclude, “ a Subject not to be prosecuted too particularly, *especially in this Place,* ” where you have just been pleading for these Formalities in Worship, and their Observance in religious Assemblies.

IN Pages 34 and 35, you consider the Difficulties that Ministers lie under in respect to Conformity, and endeavour to invalidate the Reasons urged for Non-conformity, *grounded on what affects them in particular.*

WHEN you gave your Reasons for Conformity, and the grand Challenge that followed it at *p. 15*, you considered yourself as a Lay-communicant, and as an Individual, only. But let me here observe, that if such Terms of Communion, or Admittance into Orders, are required of the *Clergy*, as they cannot in Conscience comply with; I think the *Layman* ought, as a Member of the Community and Body Politic, vigorously to join with them in opposing such Measures. Thus in *civil* Matters, when one Part of a Nation only, is unjustly

unjustly oppressed, it becomes the Duty of the other to assist in removing the Oppression : And thus our Forefathers the Laity, in *Charles* the II'd's Reign, generously followed their Pastors, when they were turned out of the Church ; or what was tantamount to a turning out, were required to subscribe a Book that one in forty had not so much as seen. This by the Bye. Let us now see how you get over the Objection abovementioned.

It is done by two Arguments. One is the same that was urged in behalf of Lay-communicants, *to wit*, there being nothing required inconsistent with any Law of God ; and the other is, that as there is no “ Necessity for dissenting “ Churches, therefore their Ministers become equally unnecessary, and consequently their “ Complaints of very little Importance.” But this last, which is an odd Chain of Reasoning, happens not to affect the Question ; because ministerial Hardships would be the same, whether there were any Dissenters or none. Nay, it is on account of these Hardships that there are so many. Their Difficulties are certainly much greater than those of Laymen. They are such as Churchmen themselves have complained of in vain ! But nothing less than *inconsistency with the express Law of God, made known to Mankind*, will render them Evil in your Sight. Perhaps it would be no difficult

ficult Matter to prove even thus much. The Difficulty would be found much greater, to prove the Consistency of their Subscriptions, either with the Laws of God, or the Laws of Reason. What is it they must subscribe? the Bible; the only revealed Rule of Faith and Practice? No—— they must subscribe a List of ARTICLES, no fewer than THIRTY-NINE in Number, ALL of Human Composition !!!

It was acknowledged, in the beginning of your Preface, that no Power on Earth, since the finishing of the sacred Canon, hath Authority to make new Institutions, or to prescribe new Articles of Faith, as obligatory upon the Conscience, *p.* 10, 11. But is there no New Articles in the thirty-nine? On the contrary, are not many of them New, and no Traces of 'em to be found in Scripture. Yet these are made Obligatory upon the Conscience, by causing every Clergyman to put his Name of Credit to them, before he dare venture to set his Foot in a Pulpit! This is a necessary Qualification in a Minister of the Church of England. It is not the Character of the Man, nor his Abilities, that will fit him for the Work, and satisfy his Superiors. He must acknowledge that the Church has Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies. He must declare his Assent and Consent to every Thing contained in the Book of Common-Prayer, the Liturgy, the Sacraments as administered
in

in the Church of England, the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds; Forms of Faith of human Invention, which, we may reasonably presume, the Majority of those who actually sign, either disbelieve, or do not understand. These are Requisites in a Minister of your Church. Conditions inconsistent with Reason, with Scripture, with the Good of Society, and with the natural and legal Right of every Individual! A Right that can always *be pleaded in Barr of the Right of the supreme Power*, which was established to preserve this Privilege to the Subject, and not to infringe it.

You endeavour to defend these Measures by saying, *p.* 31, “ It is certainly quite agreeable to
 “ human Prudence, that no One be admitted a
 “ Member of any Society, without a previous
 “ Assurance of the Agreeableness of his Principles
 “ and Apprehensions, with the established Laws
 “ of the Society,” But it is the Laws themselves that are the Subject of Debate; and if those are faulty, it is still worse to insist upon the Principles and Apprehensions of the Members to agree therewith. You add, “ And especially it is necessary
 “ that such as are to bear a principal Part in the
 “ Administration, should give such Assurance, and
 “ of their Fidelity in Discharge of such public
 “ Offices they are admitted to. And if any Thing
 “ in the Assurance required be complained of, as
 “ disagreeable to the Apprehensions of the Persons
 “ desiring

“ desiring to be so admitted, he hath an easy Remedy at hand.” I answer, the Terms required, are no Assurance of the Person’s Fidelity at all. And as to the Remedy, it is at hand indeed, but not so very *easy* ; unless the being turned out of a good Living ; being reduced to Beggary ; and to want the Necessaries of Life, be an easy Remedy. This was the Case of hundreds of honest, worthy Men, in the last Century ; who endured this Remedy, together with their innocent Families ! The Remedy now is, to turn Dissenters ; a Thing no way agreeable to your Scheme : Or, to be content with another kind of Education, to find other Means of Subsistence, and let those who have wider Throats, swallow the Bait, and comply with the Terms. And whilst the Temptations are so great and alluring, it is not likely there will be wanting Men of that Make and Disposition. What Salvo they have to satisfy their Consciences, they know best. This is certain, it is one of our national and crying Grievances.

YOUR Conclusion of this Part, is quite agreeable to my Sense of Things, *p.* 35 and 36, *viz.*

“ BUT as we have before observed, that all
 “ human Institutions are liable to Incorrectness,
 “ and may require Alterations and Improvements ;
 “ if it shall at any time be publicly made appear,
 “ that there is any thing required in such Admif-
 “ sions,

“ fions, which is inconsistent with the Laws of
 “ Truth and Righteousness, as the Dissenters com-
 “ plain ; I hope such Regulation will be made, as
 “ may convince the WORLD, that those who are
 “ intrusted with the Administration of ecclesiastical
 “ Affairs, are under the strongest Influence of
 “ Truth, and the general Rights of Mankind ;
 “ and will use their honest Endeavour that every
 “ thing in the Collation of both Offices and Re-
 “ wards, shall be administered so as to promote,
 “ as much as possible, the Interests of true Reli-
 “ gion, Piety and Learning ; that is, so as most
 “ effectually to cultivate and establish the Rights
 “ and Privileges of a free People, and particu-
 “ larly the flourishing Estate of true Christianity
 “ in this Nation : *As hardly any thing can be justly*
 “ *esteemed a greater Blemish to any public ecclesiastical*
 “ *Establishment, than to require any thing as a Con-*
 “ *dition of Admittance, of Persons duly qualified, into*
 “ *sacred Offices, which is evidently inconsistent with*
 “ *those original and fundamental Principles.*”

You now begin to relax a little, and to speak of
 Things, as inconsistent with the Laws of Truth
 and Right ; which Inconsistency, I may venture to
 say, has *been publicly made appear*, Times without
 Number. I will refer you to two Books only,
 which I remember to have read a few Years ago,
 when they were first published, and which have
 probably escaped your Notice. *A Vindication of*
the

the Principles, and Practice, of the Protestant Dissenters ; printed for JACOB ROBINSON, at the Golden Lyon in Ludgate-street, London. And *The Dissenting Gentleman's three Letters, in Answer to the Reverend Mr. WHITE*. These, I apprehend, set this Affair in a clear and convincing Light ; and will appear so to those who are open to Truth, and can divest their Minds of Prejudice and Prepossession. Yet I do not find that any *Regulation is hitherto made, so as effectually to establish the RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES of a FREE PEOPLE* in Matters of Religion. Witness the Test and Corporation Acts, which deprive Dissenters of valuable and important Privileges, to which, as faithful Subjects and Members of the Common-wealth, they have a natural and undoubted Right. This Blemish, then, still lies upon the English Nation ; where such Conditions of Admittance into sacred, if not also civil, Offices are required, of Persons otherwise duly qualified, as are evidently inconsistent with those original and fundamental Principles.

THIS has the Appearance of a Close. But I find a Page or two more of like import with the preceding. It begins, “ Thus I have written a
 “ brief Apology to the Dissenters, for leaving their
 “ Communion ; whereof I gave my Father an
 “ Abstract, at his Command, at the Time of my
 “ Conformity, and would then have made the same
 “ public, had it been required. But as that was
 “ not

“ not then done, I thought fit to embrace this
 “ Opportunity, so fairly offered me, of publish-
 “ ing this short Explication of the Reasons which
 “ influenced my Conduct. ” What this Oppor-
 tunity was, that so fairly offered, does not so
 fairly appear. Your Apology is indeed brief, for
 what real Argument it contains ; which might be
 comprehended in a very few Words. You your-
 self recapitulate them in the following Paragraph,
p. 36. “ I have shewn that every Member of a
 “ public Sovereign Society is obliged to conform
 “ to the authoritative Institutions of that Society,
 “ and that nothing can excuse that Conformity
 “ but a real or apprehended Inconsistency of those
 “ Institutions with the Laws of God. And I hope
 “ it will appear, that the ecclesiastical Institution
 “ of this Realm enjoins nothing to me, a Lay-
 “ communicant, which can be charged as being
 “ inconsistent with any Law of God. ”

I HAVE shewn, in my turn, that there are o-
 ther Laws, besides the positive, express Laws of
 God, with which no human Institutions ought to
 disagree ; namely, the Laws of Nature, of Nati-
 ons, of Reason, and of Equity. That even the
 Sovereign of a State has not Authority sufficient
 to enact any Thing inconsistent with any of these ;
 much less enforce it with penal Sanctions. I have
 farther shewn, That the ecclesiastical Constitutions
 of this Realm enjoin many Things, even to Lay-
 E Communicants,

communicants, chargeable with some of these Inconsistencies——that the enjoining any Thing in Religion, as a Part of our Duty, which is not enjoined in the sacred Writings, is an Usurpation and Imposition, (if not also contrary to divine Command) and consequently, that no Member of a Society is obliged to conform to them——I have made it appear farther, that in Regard to Faith and Rules of moral Duty, the Gospel System is complete and perfect, without the Addition of a SINGLE ARTICLE ; and with Respect to Practice, and the Worship of God, the Directions there given, by Precept and Example, are absolutely sufficient to lead Mankind into Forms of social Worship, without the Interposition of a civil Power——that such Interposition is always unnecessary, and has often proved hurtful ; as ecclesiastical History testifies : And although Things are on an easy Footing at this Day, Times may alter. If ever the Nation be so unfortunate as to fall again into the Hands of a STUART and a LAUD, the Tables will soon be turned. Cutting off Ears, slitting Noses, Jails, Fines and Imprisonments, will then come in Fashion again. Scenes too shocking for human Nature to reflect on ! When the bare Description of a single Instance of Barbarity then acted, drew Tears from a whole House of Commons ! Yet all vindicated on the Principle of the fatal Tenet, which you, Sir, have espoused !——But 'tis time
to

to proceed, and let these serve as Hints for you to enlarge upon in your own Idea.

IN Page 37, you give some Account of your Education. I doubt not it was good in the main ; but the Principles in which you were instructed, seem, by your History, to be carried too far ; which overstraining may have been some Occasion of your Apostacy, as well as that of some others. You tell us, “ It was in the Days of your Monitor, and “ is now almost universally believed amongst the “ Dissenters, that the civil Power hath no Right “ to intermeddle with Affairs of Religion.” Give me leave, Sir, to question that. I have been conversant with Dissenters, in various Parts of England, many Years, as well as with Gentlemen of the Establishment, but never found them to alledge thus much. It is not my Sentiment, I assure you. I believe that not only the civil Power, but every single Subject, has a Right to intermeddle with Affairs of Religion. The civil Power may recommend a Liturgy and Form of Worship to me, if they please ; and so can I recommend one to the civil Power. Religion is the Business of us both, and the Right of recommending it, is reciprocal ; but a Right to *injoin* or *enforce* any Mode thereof, I believe, belongs to neither. Thus vague and indeterminate are your Positions and Arguments. And yet you call this, “ *placing the Grounds of Non-conformity in the strongest Light.*” But let me tell

E 2

you,

you, Sir, if the Nonconformists could not place their Grounds in a much stronger Light, they would have made a more contemptible Figure in the World than they do at this Day.

IF “ the Christian Religion was, from the Beginning, designed to be the Religion of all Mankind, and therefore not limited to any one Set of Mode or external Administration,” (as you observe, *p. 38,*) why should we, or the civil Power, so limit it? And if *the Essentials only of Religion were laid down and insisted on in the Gospel*, by Christ and his Apostles, why should more be laid down and required by fallible Men, and made Essential to Religion? For enforcing those super-added Things, is, to all appearance, making them essential.

LASTLY; three Instances are brought, “ to shew, that there were in the early and later Ages of Christianity, fundry Observations practised by Christians, for which none could pretend the Authority of a divine Institution.” These are, the Observance of the Sabbath—the Use of Churches—and the Baptism of Infants—Here we must again beg your Pardon. The *Observance of the Sabbath*, was a divine Institution, by the Lawgiver MOSES, and religiously kept at the Time of our Saviour’s Appearance. So that there was no need of its new Institution by JESUS CHRIST, who
observed

observed it himself. The Day was afterwards altered by the Christians, from the Seventh to the First, in deference to our Lord, who rose from the Dead on that Day; and in Imitation of the Apostles, who met together on the same Day, for religious Purposes.

IN regard to the Use of Churches; It would have been a very frivolous Thing to have made an Institution of that Sort. The Jews had their Temple, or Cathedral; and Synagogues for their Places of Worship, which is but another Word for Churches. The Christians scrupled not to make use of them while they were permitted, and their Numbers were few. Afterwards they met in the open Air, in private Houses, and Buildings erected on purpose; which we don't find were either sprinkled with holy Water, or consecrated by a Bishop: It being a Matter of small Importance at that Time, (and ought to be so at all Times) what Kind of Place the People assembled in, provided the Ignorant received Instruction, and divine Service was celebrated with due Devotion, and a becoming Reverence.

As to *the Baptism of Infants*; if it must be acknowledged a Point not clearly determined in the New Testament, and so liable to dispute; it ought, for that very Reason, to be left at every one's Judgment, to do that which he thinketh right in his

own Eyes ; for by his own Actions *he standeth or falleth*, and for himself he must answer at the Bar of God. This, Sir, I humbly conceive, should be the Rule in every other Case, left undetermined in the Word of God : Provided always, that this Liberty is not made use of as a Cloak to Licentiousness, whereby Injury may accrue to the Fellow-Creature, or the State : For then, as Society is concerned, and the Body politic, whose Good must always be preferred, it directly becomes cognizable by the civil Powers ; these being Governors, as before observed, ordained by the People for their own Good and Welfare ; to maintain Order, and promote the Peace and Happiness of the Community. And where these excellent Ends can be better obtained, Religion doubtless may be made subservient. Thus, to draw an Example from late Transactions, our wise Legislators have very prudently annexed Fines and other corporal Punishments to those indisputed Crimes of Drunkenness, Whoredom, and profane Swearing : And does not the whole Nation, to a Man, acquiesce in, and applaud these Acts ; plainly perceiving their evident good Tendency with respect to Society ? But should the same Legislators presume to annex any of the above Penalties to the Non-compliance with any one Mode or Ceremony peculiar to the Church of England, or attempt any other Way to force an Observance thereof upon the People, how many thousands in the Nation would be alarmed at once ! What a Precedent would

would it be to future Times ! How would the general Order be confounded, and our mutual Harmony disturbed ! Jealousies, Animosities, Hatred, Strife and Envy, would be the Offspring, and take Place of brotherly Love, Friendship, Sincerity, Good-will, Benevolence, and every social Joy—— Behold, Sir, what a System you have adopted. See, how careful we should be, *obstare Principiis*, to resist *Beginnings*. Let us entreat you, Sir, for God's Sake, and every Gentleman whose Zeal is warm in behalf of the Church, to be cautious ; lest in avowing Enmity to the dissenting Interest, you be found to be Enemies, even to your Country !

THUS, Sir, have I followed you to the End, and considered your Pamphlet Page by Page, and said all that I intend to say upon the Subject. Little did I think my Pen would ever have been, even thus far, engaged in a theological Controversy. For tho' Religion is every Man's Business, and each of us should be satisfied in his own Mind, and be able to give a Reason of the Hope that is in him ; yet it is foreign to the Province in which I am peculiarly engaged, and which demands the most studious Attention. But your Desire of an Answer to the Present you sent me ; the Challenge it contains ; with a sort of Defiance to the whole Body of Dissenters, as though their Principles and Practice were incapable of Vindication ; together with
disadvantageou

disadvantageous Reflections upon their Character, ought by no means to be passed by, unnoticed. Where a false Bias may be given to unstable Minds, or weak ones mislead by pompous Words, and a specious shew of Argument; there Silence would be criminal. If this Work therefore should be made as public as you have made your Preface, you will not, I hope, have any Reason to complain. Not to declare one's Sentiments on such a Subject, when called upon to do it, is giving a tacit Assent to an Opponent; or basely betraying the Cause we have espoused. Mine are delivered, I trust, with impartiality, as most certainly they are with sincerity and freedom: Having too high an Opinion of your good Sense, and that of my Acquaintance, to imagine that I shall, by such a Procedure, create to myself an Enemy, or lose a Friend. It is not a Subject to be trifled with. It is of Importance to convince the Generality, that they have Sense—that their Understanding wants only Exercise and Cultivation—that in all Matters relating to Religion, they themselves are Judges—that though they may be assisted and directed by their Superiors, they ought never to be driven, or led blindfolded—that the Knowledge of Words ought never to pass for the Knowledge of Things—that all the Languages in the World can never make a Man a sound Reasoner—that how much soever we are indebted to Gentlemen who have made Advances in this Species of Learning, yet that their Labours should be valued
in

in proportion only as they are applicable to our Good. The Pains you have taken, Sir, in your other Works, and the surprizing Progress you have made in the learned Arts, at a Time when others are giving Way to Indolence, or withdrawing from the World, bespeaks our Admiration, and may merit our Thanks ; more particularly the Work to which this I have considered is a Preface ; as, by your own Account, it was an honest Intention of serving the Public, and vindicating some Point of the Christian Doctrine. For I think a Man who is possessed of any Talents, makes but an insipid Figure on the Theatre of Life, and passes very poorly off the Stage, who does not in some Shape or other, contribute his Mite to the general Good. With respect to what I have done, it is likewise honestly intended, and therefore should be well received. The friendly Part of Mankind will take it well. But some there are, whom it is next to impossible to please, either in Word or Deed : Who little consider how painful it must be to a delicate Spirit, or one possessed of but a moderate Degree of Sensibility, to find his sincere and kindest Endeavours to please the World, and serve his Fellow Creatures, evil spoken of ; or, by a false Construction, reflected back upon him, to his Disadvantage. What can preserve a Man serene and tranquil, under such Circumstances, but Fortitude, a certain Firmness of Mind, that disregards the

Petulance

Petulance of Ill-nature, and a Consciousness of his own Integrity. In fine, if through the Channel of this Performance, any Mistakes are rectified, any Errors obviated, or unjust Censure removed; if it prove a Means of inspiring any Breast with generous Sentiments, with the Love of Liberty, or the Practice of social Virtue; a few Hours of my Time cannot be misemployed, nor the Publication hereof deemed an Impropriety.

I am,

S I R,

Yours, &c.



LIVERPOOL,
September, 1755.

A. BOURN.

APPENDIX.



R. W—'s high Charge against the Preacher he censureth, for not mentioning some Things in his Sermon, which Mr W. says he shou'd have mentioned, in justice to his Subject, is very unreasonable. But to make this an Occasion of writing against Dissenters, is ridiculous and absurd: For some eminent Divines of the established Church have been guilty of the same Omission. The Words of the Text, JOHN 8. 31, 32, are thus paraphrased by Dr WHITBY; "If ye continue in (*obedience to*) my Word, then are ye my Disciples indeed; and ye shall (*farther*) know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free. (*from the Yoke of Bondage to Sin, ver. 34. and corruption*)" The same learned Expofitor hath this Note upon the Place: "CHRIST thought no *general Council*, no *infallible Judge*, necessary to the Knowledge of the Truth; but promifeth this to him, who was stedfast in the Faith, and honestly disposed to do what he knew to be his Duty."—Again, Archbishop TILLOTSON, in his Sermon upon that parallel Text, *ibid*, ver. 36, proceeding to shew more particularly in what Respects the Son of God, by his Doctrine, may be said to make us free, only mentions these two Particulars; "(1.) As it frees us from the Bondage of Ignorance and Error and Prejudice. (2.) From the Slavery of our Lusts and Passions." Not a Syllable of those Things which Mr W. imagines ought to have been brought into the Account! So that he hath shewn little Judgment or Ingenuity in this Instance, but too great a Disposition to pick a Quarrel.

MR W. seems to lay so much Stress upon the Distinction betwixt *Ministerial* and *Lay* Conformity, as leaveth room for Suspicion, that he himself may have some Scruples about the Former; and consequently must hold it to be unlawful: For he cannot but know, that *whatsoever is not of Faith*, is Sin. *Rom. 12. 23*. Now, if this be the Case in Fact, it is in vain for him to contend for the Lawfulness

of

of *Lay Communion* : For, how can it be lawful to attend and support an unlawful Ministry ? Therefore, till he hath justified Ministerial Conformity, his whole Argument for Lay Conformity can signify nothing. But *here* Mr W. manifestly shuffles and prevaricates : For, instead of vindicating the *particular Subscriptions* of the English Clergy, he flies off into a loose Harangue, about the Lawfulness of Subscriptions in general ; which is little to the Purpose. And after all, when he hath proved *both* Conformities to be lawful, (tho' what is lawful to one, may not be so to another) he hath a further Task upon his Hands, in order to support his Charge against Dissenters ; *viz.* To prove that either of them is *necessary*. For, every Thing that is lawful, is not therefore *expedient*, and much less an indispensable Duty.

MR W's Insinuation, that there are few *reasoning Dissenters*, is very trifling, in Point of Argument. We are, indeed, required to be *always ready to give an Answer to every Man, that asketh us a Reason of the Hope that is in us.* (1 PET. 3. 15.) And yet there is sufficient ground to fear, that there are too few *reasoning Christians* of any Profession. But, to infer from hence, that Christianity hath not Reason on its Side, would certainly be a wrong Conclusion. However, Mr W. is pleased to acknowledge, that he hath met with some reasoning Dissenters ; and probably he would have met with many more, if he had ever given them *all* the Meeting ; as many, perhaps, as reasoning *Consenters*, in proportion to the different Numbers of each Denomination.

MR W's Account of *extempore Prayer*, representing the Difficulty of joining in it, as a strong *Objection* against it, is a most injurious Reflection upon the Public Worship of Christians in the Apostles Days, when such a Way of Praying was practised in their religious Assemblies, by the general Confession of the most zealous and learned Advocates for Liturgies, *e. g.* Dr HAMMOND, Dr COMBER, Dr SCOT, &c. And tho' these Writers suppose that the Gift of Prayer was *extraordinary*, and in a Manner confined to the apostolic Age, it continued in use, at least, to the End of the *second* Century ; as evidently appears from the Words of TERTULLIAN, who flourished about that time. For, in his *Apology*, giving an Account of the Christians Way of *Praying*, he says, they performed this Service, *sine MONITORE, quia de PECTORE, i. e.* Without a Monitor, *because*

cause they prayed from the Heart; as Lord KING hath properly rendered the Words (Inquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the primitive Church. Part 2. ch. 2. 1. 7.) Now, this is as plain a Description of *extempore Prayer*, as any Words can express. It is observable that TERTULLIAN was well skill'd in the Roman Laws, according to EUSEBIUS (Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 2.) And in the Passage before us, he plainly alludes to the Practice of the *Roman Lawyers* in pleading at the Bar; which will receive good light from the Words of CICERO. [Orat. in Q. CÆCIL] Quid ad hæc dici potest. Non enim quæro quid tu dicturus sis? Video non te, sed hunc *librum* esse responsurum, quem MONITOR tuus hic tenet. i. e. *What can be said to these Things? For I ask not what you will say. I see that not you, but this Book is to answer, which this your Monitor holds in his Hand.* Thus, the *Monitor* was a Person, who assisted the Speaker's Memory, by suggesting proper Hints, and dictating to him, out of a *Book*, what to say. This clearly shews what TERTULLIAN means by *sine monitore*, i. e. *without a Monitor*; especially as standing in connexion with *de pectore*, i. e. *from the Heart*. And the meaning of this other Phrase will obviously appear from the Words of QUINTILIAN [Instit. lib. 10. cap. 7.] where he professedly treats of *extempore Speaking*. PECTUS est enim quod disertos facit, & vis mentis. Ideoque imperitis quoque, si modo sunt aliquo affectu conciti, verba non desunt. i. e. *It is the Heart which makes Men eloquent, and the Energy of the Mind. For which Cause, to the Unlearned also, if their Affections are but raised, Words are not wanting.* Therefore the Words of CICERO and QUINTILIAN compared together are a clear comment upon TERTULLIAN's *sine Monitore quia de Pectore*, both relating to the same Business, viz. *speaking in Public*. And, upon the whole, it is manifest, that the Words of TERTULLIAN, discoursing of the Christians *Way of Praying* in his Time, express and describe an *extempore Prayer* or Oration, in which the Mouth speaks from the Fulness of the Heart, without any set Form of Words committed to the Speaker's Memory, or dictated to him out of a Book. For this is the true Notion of *extempore Speaking*; which, by the Way, does not exclude *premeditation*, as to the *Matter* and *Method*, as Mr W. among others, seems to suppose; but

but by reading the Chapter in QUINTILIAN aforesaid, he may see his Error, and so rectify his own Mistake of *extempore Speaking*, and consequently of *extempore Prayer*, which is speaking to God. In the mean while it behoveth him seriously to reflect, whether in the Heat and Rancour of his Spirit (soured perhaps with some *private Resentments*, in which the Public is no ways interested or concerned) he hath not run undue lengths, by *calumniating* the Practice of the Apostles, and of the primitive Christians in the first and purest Ages.

As to the Question itself, concerning the Usefulness and Expediency of *free or conceived Prayer*; it may suffice for the present to transcribe the Words of Mr PIERCE, in answer to Dr WELLS, [third Letter] “ But the Doctor hath
 “ not fully considered the Difficulty which we urge;
 “ *viz.* that we are liable to have our Minds careless in the
 “ Duty itself, and not duly intent upon it, but our Thoughts
 “ are prone to wander from it: And therefore, as without
 “ Attention there can be no Devotion; so that which is a
 “ Means to help us in our Attention, is certainly a Means
 “ to promote our Devotion. And that conceived Prayer is
 “ a Means to engage our Attention, we know by our own
 “ Experience. Again, as the devotional is the hardest,
 “ as well as the chief Part of Prayer, and our Minds are
 “ backward to that; the not using constantly the same
 “ Form of Words serves for a Help to that; in as much as
 “ the same thing continually repeated by us, doth by Degrees
 “ become less moving and affecting (as we may experience
 “ also in abundance of Instances) and hence the Soul is apt
 “ to become formal in the Duty itself, and to take up with
 “ the external and less principal Part of it; an Evil which
 “ we are very liable to fall into——If the Churchmen do
 “ not find it thus, I rejoice in it; but as they take, so they
 “ ought to give the Dissenters, liberty to judge as they
 “ find. I own this is a Failing in us; (the same things
 “ ought to affect us always according to their real Weight
 “ and importance) but I think it is such a Failing as we
 “ shall never wholly get rid of in this World. And as the
 “ Dissenters are free to acknowledge this Weakness in
 “ themselves, so they judge it very lawful to use the most
 “ proper Means to redress it. Now, that conceived Pray-
 “ er

“ er is useful this way, seems to me next to a Demonstration,
 “ from what I have said. For, whereas the Soul hath more
 “ scope to wander, while the Words of a Form are said by
 “ rote, or read out of a Book : there seems to be a kind
 “ of necessity of its being more fixed and intent upon the
 “ Business of Prayer, when a Person prays without a Form.
 “ And I doubt not, but that a Person attending to the
 “ Directions given by Bishop WILKINS, will not find the
 “ Difficulty about the Matter, and the Words of Prayer
 “ very great ; but the other Difficulty of wandering
 “ Thoughts is not so easily cured. And as to those, who
 “ join with the Person officiating, I can’t see but that, as
 “ their not knowing beforehand the Prayers they are to join
 “ with, will serve very much to engage their Attention ;
 “ so this will not infer their being more taken up in attend-
 “ ing to the inferior Parts of Prayer ; since, if the Words
 “ used are apt and proper, they immediately convey the
 “ Speaker’s Thoughts to the Minds of the Hearers, and are
 “ without difficulty joined with by them.”

THIS may serve for an Answer to Mr W’s bungling
 Account of *extempore Prayer*, which he seems to have bor-
 rowed from Mr BENNET, rather than consulted in it his
 own superior Genius. Proceed we now to examine his
 Notion concerning the *Regimen* of the Christian Church.
 And here we should be glad to know what Idea Mr W.
 hath of the primitive Church, for the three first Centuries,
 and whether he supposes that, during this long Period, she
 had, or had not a Power to order religious Matters within
 herself, *independently* on the civil Magistrate. If he say, that
 she had no such Power ; then, according to him, she was
 guilty of a continued Usurpation all that Time. On the
 other Hand, if she had such a Power (which Mr W. may
 be willing to grant for fear of worse Consequences) we desire
 to be informed, how the Christian Church came to lose
 this Power ; or by what Law it afterwards devolved upon
 the civil Magistrate ! ’Tis certain there was a *Form of Ad-
 ministration* in the Christian Church, long before the Reign
 of CONSTANTINE the Great, the first Christian Emperor,
 as we learn, not only from Scripture, but also from JUSTIN
 MARTYR’s valuable Account of the primitive Worship, in his
 Time, [Apolo. 2.] where he particularly mentions the reli-
 gious.

gious Observation of the *Lord's Day*. And yet (so unhappy is he in his Illustrations) Mr W. alledgeth the *Christian Sabbath* as one Instance, amongst others, of the *Deficiency* of the Scripture Rule, or Rubric to be supplied, by whom? —Why, according to Mr W's *Argument*, by the civil Magistrate! —By this the Reader may judge of the Pertinency and Force of his other Examples —The Truth is, the Church, and the State, are two *different*, but not *opposite* Societies; which therefore can never clash with each other, so long as they act within their proper Spheres. And the Danger of *Imperium in imperio*, so much talked of to so little Purpose, is only *then*, when the Church unduly meddles with the State, or the State with the Church.

BEFORE we conclude, it is natural to ask, Where is the Pertinency and Propriety of such a PREFACE, to the CHRISTIANITY of the NEW TESTAMENT, as not only contains a Scheme of Principles unknown to the New Testament, but also breathes too little of a Christian Spirit? When Mr W. takes upon him to resolve all Difference of Sentiment, and a Dissent from himself into *Ignorance*, *Preverseness*, *Pride* and *Obstinacy*; is not this too censorious and too assuming? —Is it not putting on an Air of Infallibility, setting up for a Judge of Hearts, and boldly stepping into the Throne of God? *But who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth.* This Master is CHRIST, the true Head of his Church. [Rom. 14. 4. MAT. 23. 8. Eph. 1. 22.] In short, Mr W. speaks of the *Saints*, once and again, with so much Contempt, as if he had chosen the *Way of Sinners*, or the *Seat of the Scornful*. However, he hath strangely mistaken, and misapplied the Case of those over-righteous Men, who said *Stand by thyself, &c.* For this Character exactly suits the proud *Pharisees*, who, like somebody else, thought the *Word of God* a deficient Rule, without the *Precepts of Men*, to make it compleat. And so, valuing themselves highly upon their *canonical* Sanctity, they severely censured, uncharitably condemned, and insolently despised all that differed from them, and did not conform to their *unscriptural* Customs and Impositions.

